



**January 2003**

## **Community Scholarship Matching Grant Program Adoption of Updated Rules**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Overview**

The Washington State Community Scholarship Matching Grant program provides \$2,000 matching grants to community-based 501(c)(3) organizations raising at least the same amount for college scholarships through local fundraising initiatives. At the Higher Education Coordinating Board's October 2002 meeting, staff briefed the Board on proposed changes to the program rules. The proposed amendments reflect changes in statutory budget language and formalize administrative procedures, such as the priorities for awarding grants.

A public hearing was held in early January, when one written comment was received in support of the changes. No changes have been made to the proposed rules as presented to the Board in October. The Board is being asked to adopt the rules on a permanent basis at its January meeting.

#### **Program Background**

Currently funded at \$251,000 per year, the Community Scholarship Matching Grant program provides approximately 125 community-based organizations with \$2,000 matching grants. The matching grants generate community support for local residents pursuing higher education and are an expression of the state's interest in supporting local fundraising. By leveraging money raised by local organizations for scholarships, the state can help fill the growing gap between college costs and the amount of money families and taxpayer-supported financial aid programs can supply.

The program was funded at \$50,000 per year, from its inception in 1989, until 1999-00, when funding was increased to \$251,000 per year. Since the funding increase in 1999-00, the agency has worked with a program advisory committee to create the administrative procedures necessary to carry out the broader purposes of this larger program.

The 2002-03 year marks the fourth year of this more significant level of funding. Staff is recommending that program rules be amended to codify current statutory and administrative practices.

### **Summary of Proposed Revisions**

The rules, as outlined in detail in the October Board packet, incorporate two items not reflected in the program's original budget proviso language or its original rules:

- Community-based groups can now qualify for more than one grant; and
- Preference is given to organizations affiliated with the citizens' scholarship foundation.

In addition, the proposed rules establish priorities for awarding the grants, with the highest priority given to new organizations and groups that have never received the grant. And, finally, the rules eliminate reference to the program as a demonstration project and clarify reporting requirements.

### **Requested Board Action**

At its meeting on January 29, 2003, the Board will be asked to adopt Resolution 03-02, amending program rules for the Washington State Community Scholarship Matching Grant program.

**RESOLUTION NO. 03-02**

WHEREAS, The Higher Education Coordinating Board is directed by the 2001-03 Operating Budget (SB 6153) to administer the Community Scholarship Matching Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, The Higher Education Coordinating Board is authorized by RCW 28B.80 to adopt rules as necessary to implement the program; and

WHEREAS, The 2001-03 Operating Budget (SB 6153) adopted by the 2001 Legislature establishes that the grant may be received more than once, requiring the establishment of priorities for award; and

WHEREAS, Preference in awarding grants is to be given to Washington Dollars for Scholars affiliates; and

WHEREAS, Other amendments are needed to codify administrative procedures;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board adopt permanent rules amending WAC 250-69 to reflect the current statutory and administrative provisions of the Community Scholarship Matching Grant Program.

Adopted:

January 29, 2003

Attest:

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Bob Craves, Chair

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Pat Stanford, Secretary